

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 3 and 7-16 are currently pending. Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 17, and 18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; and Claim 10 has been amended by the present amendment. Claim 10 has been amended to address a cosmetic matter of form only, and does not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,167,474 to Sugai et al. (hereinafter “the ‘474 patent”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,496,510 to Tsukakoshi et al. (hereinafter “the ‘510 patent”); Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘474 patent in view of the ‘510 patent and U.S. Patent No. 6,069,895 to Ayandeh (hereinafter “the ‘895 patent”); Claims 5 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,760,314 to Iwata (hereinafter “the ‘314 patent”) in view of the ‘510 patent; Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘510 patent in view of the ‘314 patent; and Claims 3 and 7-16 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 3 and 7-16.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Claim 10 has been amended to address an informality noted upon Applicants’ review. In particular, Claim 10 has been amended to add the word “and.”

Accordingly, in view of the prior indication of allowability, no further issues are outstanding and entry of the present amendment is believed to be in order. The present

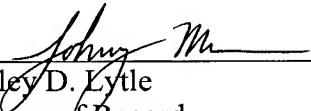
application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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